

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 EB-11 COME-00 SS-14 NSC-10 STR-08 SCA-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-09 NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01 USIA-12

PRS-01 TRSE-00 OMB-01 L-03 H-02 NIC-01 SAJ-01 RSR-01

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R 220630 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6315

CONFIDENTIAL SOFIA 0320

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, BU, US

SUBJ: BULGARIAN PLANS FOR TRADE DELEGATION TO UNITED STATES

REF: A. STATE 046637

B. SOFIA 0304

1. AS REQUESTED REF A, I CALLED ON DEPMINFONTRADE LUKANOV MARCH 22 TO ENSURE THAT BAKER RESPONSE TO ZDRAVCHEV MARCH 8 PROPOSALS HAD REACHED MINFONTRADE UNDILUTED.

2. AFTER HEARING EXPOSITION PER REF A, LUKANOV FIRST REITERATED MFT PLANNED THREE STAGE APPROACH, FIRST OF WHICH INVOLVED DELEGATION OF ENTERPRISE REPRESENTATIVES TO SEE US BUSINESSMEN, WHICH HE BELIEVED ALREADY AGREED BY BOTH SIDES AND WOULD REQUIRE NO US GOVERNMENT PROGRAMMING.

3. LUKANOV EXPRESSED SURPRISE AND DISAPPOINTMENT AT US VIEW OF NATURE PROPOSED VISIT OF SECOND STAGE DELEGATION OF PRIMARILY INTERGOVERNMENTAL NATURE. HE HAD AFTER RECEIVING ZDRAVCHEV REPORT EXPECTED ENGAGE IN "PRELIMINARY, NON-CONCLUSIVE CONSULTATIONS" WITHOUT LIMITATION OF SUBJECTS, AND HE WAS NOW BEING TOLD US SIDE WAS "NOT WILLING TO BEGIN PRELIMINARY CONSULTATIONS".

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WHEN I EXPLAINED WE WERE ONLY TRYING INSURE AGAINST TOO HIGH EXPECTATIONS FROM VISIT, LUKANOV SAID WE WERE REALLY SAYING THAT DELEGATION MAY COME AS LONG AS IT DOES NOTHING IMPORTANT. HE DESCRIBED THIS AS A PITY IN VIEW BULGARIAN DEVELOPMENT PLANS AND CONSEQUENT POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING COOPERATIVE VENTURES AND OF IMPORTING COMPLETE PLANTS WHICH IN SOME CASES WOULD INVOLVE TENS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN SINGLE TRANSACTIONS. HE POINTED TO TRADE AS MIGHT TOOL FOR IMPROVING RELATIONS, ADDING THAT DELAY IN THIS SPHERE COULD HARM TOTALITY OF RELATIONS. LUKANOV SAID GOB WILL HAVE TO REVIEW ITS POSITION IN LIGHT MY VISIT.

4. I GAVE LUKANOV COPY OF MILLS BILL AND STATED THAT, WHETHER OR NOT BILL REFLECTS APPROPRIATE STAND, IT IS FACT OF LIFE AND WOULD HAVE TO BE CONSIDERED AS AFFECTING ALSO US- BULGARIAN RELATIONS. ALTHOUGH LUKANOV UNWILLING COMMENT DEFINITIVELY ON APPLICABILITY TO BULGARIA, AND DID NOT READ BILL, HE REITERATED OPINION THAT IT DOES NOT APPLY HERE. I SUGGESTED FLEXIBILITY RE DATE OF POPOV VISIT PENDING LEGISLATIVE DEVELOPMENTS. I ALSO EXPRESSED PERSONAL OPINION THAT QUESTION OF OUTSTANDING BONDS MUST BE SETTLED AT SOME TIME, AND THAT SETTLEMENT SOONER RATHER THAN LATER MIGHT BRING BENEFITS IN TERMS IMPROVEMENT OF ATMOSPHERE.

5. LUKANOV REFERRED AGAIN TO BULGARIAN WILLINGNESS ACCEPT PACKAGE DEAL INCLUDING MFN BUT SAID WAY THINGS WERE GOING, WITH SERIOUS TALKS UNDERWAY ON CONSULAR CONVENTION, PROGRESS IN TRADE FIELD WAS LAGGING WAY BEHIND.
HOUSTON

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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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